

## SOIL AND WATER *Resources*

February 2015

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### Missouri Regional Conservation Partnership Program Projects Announced

Our Missouri Waters Targeted Conservation is one of five Missouri projects among the more than 100 high-impact conservation projects announced by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack as part of the new Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

The Our Missouri Waters Targeted Conservation Project, lead by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources will use an existing effort, Our Missouri Waters, to further implement the wise, cost-effective installation of farm practices in basins throughout Missouri. Our Missouri Waters provides an effective water resource framework that values local leadership and provides technical and financial assistance to aid locals in solving natural resource problems. The project will also support implementation of the Missouri Nutrient Loss Reduction Strategy beginning in 2015. The primary goals of this project will be maximizing improvements in water quality and wildlife habitat.

Through partner agreements this project will measure practice effectiveness through stream monitoring, edge of field monitoring and a nutrient tracking tool to compare nitrogen and phosphorus load reductions.

“RCPP puts our partners in the driver’s seat,” said J.R. Flores, state conservationist with the USDA’s Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). “Projects are led locally, and demonstrate the value of strong public-private partnerships that deliver solutions to tough natural resource challenges.” This year’s projects in Missouri will accomplish a wide diversity of agricultural and natural resource goals,” said Flores.

“To make this grant successful it will take the work of our local soil and water districts to ensure we are marketing the effort to bring additional cost-share money Missouri landowners as well as technical assistance and monitoring.” said Sara Parker Pauley, director of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

The other four Missouri projects include:

- Northwest Missouri Urban and Rural Farmers United For Conservation - Lead Partner: Jackson County Soil and Water Conservation District. This project will focus on issues that affect both rural farms and smaller urban farms.
- Little Otter Creek Watershed Project - Lead Partner: Caldwell County Commission.



NRCS Photo

**DNR director Sara Parker Pauley and NRCS state conservationist J.R. Flores sign the RCPP Our Missouri Waters award.**

- Regional Grassland Bird and Grazing Land Enhancement Initiative - Lead Partner: Missouri Department of Conservation.
- Restoring Glade and Woodland Communities for Threatened Species in the Ozarks of Southeast Missouri - Lead Partner: Missouri Department of Conservation.

RCPP's historic focus on public-private partnership enables private companies, local communities and other non-government partners a way to invest in efforts to keep land resilient and water clean, and promote economic growth in agriculture, construction, tourism and outdoor recreation, and other industries.

RCPP is a 5-year \$1.2 billion USDA commitment. Projects not selected in this first year may be eligible in subsequent years. Visit for more information about Missouri's Regional Conservation Partnership Program Projects visit <http://www.swcd.mo.gov/internal/rcpp/rcpp.htm>.

### Missouri to Host 2015 National Envirothon

Missouri will host the national Envirothon from July 27 through Aug. 2 at the Missouri State University in Springfield. Missouri expects about 59 teams to come to the event with approximately 500 students and teachers from the U.S. and Canadian provinces participating.



DNR Photo by Van Beydler

**Students work as a team in the field to find answers for questions about the soil at the 2014 Missouri Envirothon.**

Reference materials for students and teachers are available through local soil and water conservation districts. These districts work with cooperating agencies, educators, community and interest groups to conduct regional competitions. The top three teams at the regional competitions advance to the state competition, to be held on May 1 in Jefferson City. The winning team represents Missouri at the national Envirothon.

Students answer written questions and conduct hands-on investigation of environmental issues in five categories including soils/land use, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife and current environmental issues.

In addition to a written test, the teams also present an oral presentation solving a specific natural resource issue. The continuing support of the Envirothon reflects the participation of multiple partners.

Volunteers are being recruited to help coordinate activities at the event. If you are interested in helping at the National Envirothon, please contact Peggy Lemons at 573-893-5188, ext. 3.



### Perry County SWCD Hosts Beef Facility Tour

The Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District held a field day on Jan. 21 for area landowners to tour the counties first two completed Beef Manure Management Facilities installed using cost-share approved through the Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District.

Approximately 56 participants learned about the facilities from the landowners as well as Perry County SWCD technician LaVern Taylor and NRCS engineer Mark Nussbaum.

The purpose of these facilities is to manage manure from beef production to prevent or minimize degradation of soil and water resources. While the specific design of the building is suited to number of animals and needs of the landowner, all facilities have both a feeding and manure storage area.

Through winter months, hay and other feed supplements are provided to beef cattle in the building. As manure builds up, it is pushed into the manure storage area of the building. The stored manure is eventually applied to return nutrients to the landowner's grazing acres following a required Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plan.



DNR Photo by Deanna Smith

**The Perry County Soil and Water Conservation District held a tour day to visit two beef facilities built using cost-share funds in 2014. Pictured is a stocker facility.**



### Missouri Beef Summit held in Columbia

Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon recently spoke at the Missouri Department of Agriculture's Missouri Beef Summit earlier this year. The event was held on Jan. 5, 2015 at the Reynolds Alumni Center at the University of Missouri in Columbia. Gov. Nixon told the more than 230 attendees, "We have an opportunity to add significant value in rural Missouri. We need to assist the farmers, producers and others to have the best support and help for a path that leads to more value in our state. We need to work to keep more of this value in Missouri and use our beef resources, natural resources and human resources to move Missouri up the value chain and put those dollars in Missouri's producers and rural economies."

Experts from business, government and education served on panels to discuss the future of Missouri beef. Panels represented economic concerns, producers, processors, commodities, and ag/science and beef technology.

"Agriculture is our rural community vitality and our economic development. That is another motivation for moving the beef industry forward, because communities

benefit, beef producers benefit and the State of Missouri benefits," said Missouri Department of Agriculture director Richard Fordyce. "I promise you this is not the end of the conversation."

"If you're thinking about expanding your facility we want to work with you to provide guidance to obtain an operating permit," said Kurt Boeckmann representing the Missouri Department of Natural Resources on the Ag/Science and Beef Technology panel. "We have five regional offices in the state with staff that can answer questions to help guide you through the process and help maintain the viability of agriculture."

Soil and Water Districts Commission Chair Gary Vandiver, Soil and Water Conservation Program Director Colleen Meredith and Missouri Department of Natural Resources Water Protection Program Director John Madras also attended the summit as well as several board members and staff from Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

See a short video with Missouri Department of Agriculture director Richard Fordyce talking about the beef summit at <http://youtu.be/2bhTQA6vcX4>.



Ag/science and beef technology panelists delivered information to the attendees and fielded questions during the 2015 Missouri Beef Summit.

### Plan for the Future Committee Meeting Held Jan. 21 in Jefferson City



The Plan for the Future Program Delivery and Operations Sub-committee discusses future needs to help accomplish soil and water conservation in Missouri.

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## SOIL AND WATER *Resources*

This publication is produced by the Missouri Department of Natural Resources Soil and Water Conservation Program. Funds for this publication are provided by Missouri's parks, soils and water sales tax.

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